Deal with Hyundai

688. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH;
SHRI [PRAMOD MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item published in the Economic Times, Bombay dated 12th November, 1990, under the caption 'Deal with Hyundai-Delay to cost more foreign exchange burden';

(b) whether it is a fact that the delay in finalising the contract with Hyundai for purchase of six oil tankers has resulted in cancellation of order which would mean foreign exchange burden on Government;

(c) if so, what were the reasons for non-clearance of the case from mid-January to February 28th, 1990 the last date for expiry of the contract; and

(d) what action Government propose lo take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES WIT$_H$ ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI MANUBHAI KOTADIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (do No, Sir. No orders were placed with the yard and so the question of cancellation of the order did not arise. Government considered the proposal in, March, 1990 but did not find it possible to approve it because of foreign exchange constraints^

Lpgradation of talks between India and Pakistan

689. CHOWDHRY HARI SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have expressed their readiness to upgrade to political level the discussions which they had with Pakistan for normalising relations at the Foreign Secretaries level; and

(b) if so, by when a Ministerial level meeting is expected to take place between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA): (a) and (b) Government of India has always been willing to have a dialogue at any level considered appropriate, with Pakistan for the resolution of bilateral differences and for the normalisation of relations. Political-level discussions can be fruitful only in an atmosphere of mutual trust and confidence and after due preparation. At present, the two countries are engaged in a dialogue at the level of Foreign Secretaries. Political level talks will be initiated as soon as the time for it is propitious.

Solution of Sri Lankan problem

690. CHOWDHRY HARI SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has suggested to Sri Lanka to sort out the ethnic crisis there within the framework of the Indo-Sri Lankan Peace Agreement;

ID) if so, what is me reaction of the Sri Lankan Government in this regard; and

(c) the manner in which Government propose to deal with this problem in Sri Lanka in the wake of a war-like situation between LTTE and Sri Lankan Government?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA): (a) The Government of India believes that the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement (July 1987) provides the framework for a settlement of the ethnic issue.

(b) On the basis of the devolution pac kage, contained in the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement, the Sri Lanka Government enacted the 13 th Constitutional Amend ment (Nov., 1987) and consequential legis lation. It devolves on the Sri Lanka Gov ernment to implement it in letter and spirit.

(c) The hostilities between the Goveinment Forces and LTTE since June 1990 have led to continuing influx of refugees tind large-scale civilian suffering. Only a negotiated political settlement which takes into account legitimate Tami] demands can iead to a lasting peace in Sri Lanka and create conditions which would permit the return of all refugees.

U. S. armed forces in the Gulf

691. CHOWDHRY HARI SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the US armed forces have given indications that they would leave the Gulf region only after attaining the basic objective of Iraq's complete and unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait; and

(b) if so, what action Government contemplate to defuse the tension in that area?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA): (a) A number of United States officials have made statements to this effect.

(b) Government are of the view that every effort must be made to seek a peaceful solution of this crisis; and that the first step towards such a solution would be the unconditional withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait and the restoration of the sovereignty and independence of the latter.

Resolution of Krishna water dispute

692. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a> whether it is a fact that the Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra met at Tirupathi and Bangalore to resolve the Krishna water dispute; and

(b) if so, with what result?

TH_E MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI MANUBHAI KOTADIA): (a) Yes, Sir. The Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra met at Tirupati and Bangalore on 21-4-1990 and 22. 8. 1990 respectively to discuss the issues relating to the Telugu Ganga Project and sharing of surpms Krishna waters^

(b) After discussing various alternative proposals, it was decided to meet again at Mahabaleshwar.

U. N. Observer Mission in Kashmir

693. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present strength of U. N. Observer Mission in Kashmir;

(b) the purpose for which these U. N. Observers were posted there;

(c) whether the circumstances which necessitated their posting in Kashmir still exist-

(d) if not, whether Government propose to take up this matter with the U. N. O. for the withdrawal of U. N. observers; and

(e) whether any militant in Kashmir had contacts with the U. N. observers there?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA): (a) The current strength of UN Observers stationed in Kashmir i_s 37.

(b) The UN Military Observers Group was established specifically with reference to the old 1949 ceasefire line which has no validity any longer. They have not been entrusted with any responsibility in regard to the present Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir.

(c) No, Sir.